VAQUITA

🐟 1. Bycatch in Illegal Fishing Nets

The **#1 reason** vaquitas are endangered is **bycatch** — they get accidentally caught and drown in **gillnets** used for illegal fishing.

Gillnets are long nets that hang in the water and trap fish by their gills.

These nets are primarily set to catch **totoaba**, a fish whose **swim bladder** is highly valued in China for traditional medicine.

Both totoaba and vaquitas are about the same size, so vaquitas easily become entangled.

🐋 2. Extremely Low Population

As of 2024, **fewer than 10 vaquitas** are believed to remain.

With so few individuals, every death significantly impacts the survival of the species.